



## Environment Department

SUSANA MARTINEZ, GOVERNOR

Ryan Flynn, Cabinet Secretary  
Butch Tongate, Deputy Secretary

### **NEWS RELEASE**

**August 7, 2015**

*NMED's mission is to protect and restore the environment and to foster a healthy and prosperous New Mexico for present and future generations.*

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### **Environment Department Actions Address EPA Gold King Mine Spill** *Contaminated Plume Expected To Pass Aztec/Farmington Area Friday Evening*

**Santa Fe** –New Mexico Environment Secretary Ryan Flynn and State Engineer Tom Blaine are in Farmington and Aztec, New Mexico today, working with local and regional leaders as well as federal staff to alert and advise San Juan County citizens of safety precautions, monitoring and testing activities, and important Environment Department actions responsive to the EPA Gold King Mine wastewater release that occurred last Wednesday and is now coursing through the Animas River.

- ☐ The contaminated plume is expected to pass the Aztec/Farmington area tonight.
- ☐ Today, the Environment Department authorized up to \$500,000 in emergency funds to conduct activities in response to the King Gold Mine spill.
- ☐ Today, the Environment Department is deploying real time water quality monitors (called sondes) in the Animas River at three sites. This water quality monitoring activity is separate from the Environmental Protection Agency's sampling activities to ensure promptness and transparency. Secretary Flynn reported "We have yet to receive any data from EPA concerning San Juan County water quality."
- ☐ Today, the Environment Department is independently collecting water samples to test for pH, heavy metals and other constituents of concern.
- ☐ While on site today, the State Engineer Tom Blaine and Secretary Flynn have briefed the public, local leadership, and all stakeholders to stay out of the river and to refrain from pulling water from the river for any purpose.
- ☐ New Mexico's Department of Game and Fish advises anglers not to fish in the Animas River and not to eat fish caught in the San Juan River watershed.
- ☐ Today, the Environment Department coordinated with the San Juan County Emergency Operation Center to get potable water stations set up at local fire stations.
- ☐ The Department of Game and Fish is monitoring the possible effects on New Mexico fisheries and wildlife from a contamination dam spill August 5 at the Gold King Mine above Silverton, Colorado.

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